

**Year of gaining Fire Risk Registration:** 2012

**Membership Grade:** Member

**Qualifications:** MSc in Fire Engineering (UCLan) 2015, NEBOSH Diploma (RRC) 2010, HND Fire Safety Engineering (UCLan) 2006, HNC Fire Safety Studies (Fire Service College) 2005, BSc (Hons) Estate Management (University of Reading) 1999

**Job Title:** Safety Consultant

**Employer:** NFU Mutual-Risk Management Services Limited, UK

**Please describe your current role:**

I work with production and rural-based industries to manage the fire, health and safety aspects of their business. I carry out higher risk fire risk assessments, provide specialist fire safety advice and discuss issues with fire safety enforcement bodies. I also conduct Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) assessments for agricultural and food producing businesses – places such as distilleries, flour mills and anaerobic digesters.

**How long have you been conducting fire risk assessments?**

I have been doing fire risk assessments since leaving Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service in 2006. I spent 7 years as a fire risk assessor in London after enforcing fire safety legislation in Hampshire. It was a fantastic opportunity to understand the complicated means of escape you encounter in a city built before Building Regulations existed.

**What has been your most challenging professional episode to date and what did you learn from it?**

In 2012 I began a Master's degree in Fire Engineering at UCLan. I did this on a part-time basis over 3 years whilst also working full-time and looking after my son. Though the course was demanding, I earned a distinction grade. I was also awarded a prestigious prize for best dissertation. I learnt determination and resilience, as well as a lot about fire engineering.

**How did you first hear about the IFE Register of Fire Risk Assessors?**

The consultancy company that I worked for in London wanted all its fire risk assessments to be



third-party accredited. As I'd been a member of the IFE since 2007, I decided this was the logical route to demonstrating this.

**How has being on the Fire Risk Register helped you professionally?**

Being on the Fire Risk Register shows that my skills, knowledge and qualifications have been peer-assessed and I am considered within my industry to be a competent fire risk assessor. With my details on the IFE's website, I regularly get contacted regarding fire safety work.

**What are your career aspirations for the future?**

Working in the insurance industry, I am gaining property protection knowledge to add to my background in life safety aspects of fire. In the future, I hope to combine both in a strategic role.

**Do you have any advice for other women beginning a career in the fire industry?**

Network and take every opportunity! I have made many good friends and contacts during my studies. IFE branch meetings and seminars are another great place to meet others in our industry. Sometimes, you do need to overcome stereotyping – learn to take it in your stride. That's when a smile and swift confirmation of your technical expertise becomes very important.